

Christian Work in Italy.

THE

Biblical College

IN

Rome.

Trustees of the College.

MORRIS K. JESUP,
JOHN TAYLOR JOHNSTON,
HOWARD POTTER,
THEODORE ROOSEVELT,
GEORGE H. STUART.

New York, February 1st., 1873.

This Italian movement, I was led to believe while I was in Italy, is one of the most promising agencies for the evangelization of that people; and the College a very desirable thing indeed to furnish an Italian ministry for the Italian people, who are somewhat sensitive in regard to foreign interference, but will listen with interest to instructors of their own nation and language. I heartily commend the enterprise.

THOS. E. VERMILYE.

In Rome, a school of the prophets to train evangelical ministers, from out of the native population, to become pastors of the churches which are now springing forth all over Italy, like stars in its long night! American Christians should vie with each other in promoting Italian evangelization.

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

I approve this work and give it my hearty commendation.

HOWARD CROSBY,	W. ORMISTON,
WM. H. BOOLE,	ROBERT CAMERON,
E. P. ROGERS,	N. W. CONKLING,
ROB'T. R. BOOTH,	WM. H. FERRIS,
MORRIS C. SUTPHEN,	ALEX. R. THOMPSON,
CHARLES F. DEEMS,	GEORGE B. CHEEVER,
	and others.

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BIBLICAL COLLEGE
IN
ROME.

OCCASIONAL PAPERS NO. III.

EDITED BY JOHN B. THOMPSON,
MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

NEW YORK
AMERICAN CHURCH PRESS CO., 111 EAST NINTH STREET.
1873.

This is to certify that the Rev. John B. Thompson, D.D., is hereby commissioned by the Evangelization Committee of the Free Italian Church to proceed to America, to further the interests of said Church by representing said Church at the judicatories of sister churches, by collecting funds for the general work of the Church, and especially for the support of the Biblical College in Rome.

In this work he is affectionately and earnestly commended to the Christians of that land.

ABM. R. VAN NEST, JR.,
President of Missionary Committee.

JOHN R. MACDOUGALL,
Treasurer and Foreign Secretary.

FLORENCE, ITALY, *October 30, 1872.*

I regard the Biblical College in Rome as of the first importance to the progress of the Gospel in Italy, and can speak of the integrity and prudence of Dr. John B. Thompson, the Commissioner of the Italian Committee, from long acquaintance. Contributors may rest assured that moneys collected by him, whether for the College, or for the support of Evangelists, will be used for the purposes designated.

WM. H. CAMPBELL,
President of Rutgers College.

NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J.,
February 13, 1873.

An educated ministry is at this time of the utmost importance to Italy. The work of the Free Italian Church, and the Commissioner, merit the fullest confidence. We have known Rev. Dr. Thompson for twenty years, and hope he may meet with speedy success in securing funds both for the College and for the support of a regular ministry.

DAVID D. DEMAREST, A. B. VAN ZANDT, S. M. WOODBRIDGE, JOHN DE WITT.	} <i>Professors in the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church in America.</i>
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NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J.,
February 14, 1873.

A BIBLICAL COLLEGE IN ROME.

ROME is free ! After centuries of papal tyranny checkered with a hundred and twenty vain revolutions, the power of priestcraft is broken. Rome is again a free city and the

CAPITAL OF A FREE STATE.

There is before the Gospel of our LORD JESUS CHRIST in Italy an open door, and no man can shut it. The stupendous Providence of God has made history so rapidly that its opening lines sweep beyond our recognition. But on the Italian peninsula and even in the Eternal City (where until recently no Protestant or Evangelical Church would have been permitted, and where even a scanty religious Service under the flag of the United States at the rooms of the Embassy could scarcely hold a begrudged place), there are breaking into life multitudinous centres of Christian work, and, under the eye and almost within the hearing of Pio Nono, busy presses are printing copies of the Word of God, and living Evangelists are preaching. The disenthralment which but a year or two ago seemed a dream, a hope only, has become a reality. From the Alps to the Adriatic, from Susa to Sicily,

ITALY IS OPEN TO THE GOSPEL.

There is no longer any power to prevent its preaching. And a free Church, the first fruits of Italy unto CHRIST, reaches out its scarcely disenthralled hands with imploring entreaty for help to train men for the preaching of the Gospel, and to send them forth over the mountains and through the valleys, and into the cities, and the hamlets, bearing the glad tidings of the Grace of God.

In the General Assembly at Florence, in 1871, twenty three Churches were represented and four Evangelists from incipient stations were present. In the Assembly at Rome, in 1872, twenty-nine deputies were present, representing twenty-eight Churches; and, in addition, four Evangelists. These facts are enough to bring to the view of all that love the LORD JESUS the vigorous beginning of

THE FREE ITALIAN CHURCH.

Italy can be won for CHRIST only by Italians. In the beginning of the Gospel, men of another race, in the spirit and power of apostles, may and doubtless must bring the glad tidings, especially to uncivilized nations. But the Church of CHRIST in Italy must be a Church of Italians, with its native-born and home-trained Ministry. The Free Church of Italy has reached that point in its career when this native Ministry has become a pressing necessity. To this end there must be a competent training school in the heart of the Italian peninsula. From the Capital must go forth, as of old, the bands of faithful men who are to win the peninsula for CHRIST.

It hath pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. And the logic is quick, sharp, and unanswerable: How shall they believe on Him of Whom they have not heard; and

how shall they hear without a preacher ; and how shall they preach except they be sent ?

THE CRISIS IS URGENT.

Disenthralment from papal bondage means, and that speedily, either the victory of faith in the Redeemer or dreary lapse into hideous infidelity. The reaction from slavish faith in a Church system has been proven again and again to be, 1st. the vacuity ; and 2d, the malignity of utter unbelief. Witness France in the revolution of the last century. Already the lurid symptoms of such reaction have appeared in Italy. Where the domination of the Church means the luxury of the priesthood and the oppression of the people, the downfall of priestly misrule means the contemptuous abnegation of all religious faith, whose bloom and fruit are the furious and destructive orgies of Communism. It is a sufficiently significant fact that in the newly attained license of the press, Italian newspapers that know the appetite which it is profitable to feed, boldly choose for themselves such titles as, Satan (Satanas) ; The voice of the Devil (La voce del Diavolo) ; The Thief (Il Ladro).

IS ITALY TO BE LEFT

to meet this element as it has been in Paris ? Are the scenes of Communistic rule to be repeated ? Or is God's redeeming Gospel to be brought in to heal the hurt of this oppressed people ; and to save them for truth, and freedom, and CHRIST ? There can be but one answer. And what is to be done, is to be done quickly. The need, the opportunity, the peril, and the only adequate means, are full in the view of Christian eyes. To rescue this beautiful land

from popery, to hold it against fierce unbelief and destructive radicalism, native-born men must be trained and sent forth, to plant everywhere the living Gospel. Such men offer themselves. And to give them the needful training, the Church in Italy appeals for help to establish

A BIBLICAL COLLEGE IN ROME.

And not for Rome alone, nor yet for Italy alone, but for the world. The news of such a college in Rome would thrill through the Catholic world as a premonition of doom. The moral effect would be to weaken the sinews and unstring the nerves of hoary error. With a Biblical College in Rome, what may we not anticipate? For, spite of all our hopes or fears, Rome *is* the religious centre of the world. From no other source goes forth a tithe of the religious influence with which, whether for good or for evil, she pervades the nations. And it will be so for many years to come.

Colleges in Rome are legion. Students are gathered from every land and every clime. Monasteries, as such, may be suppressed. But many of them will continue as institutions of learning. And in all of them the zeal for popery will burn brighter than ever.

A SPIRIT OF INQUIRY

is abroad even now. Already thoughtful men, students, and priests even, are seeking for the truth. Individuals here and there—scores in all—are writing to well-known evangelists, asking for more light. Shall there not be among the many institutions teaching error, at least one which teaches truth, one where inquiring minds may have their doubts resolved? What avails it to assert

that Romanism is a perversion of Christianity if it be not proven to the thoughtful! To denounce infidelity and atheism if one does not show a more excellent way! There is no real conflict between science and true Christianity. To show this, masters of science who are at the same time masters of Christianity, skilled in

BIBLICAL AS WELL AS SCIENTIFIC LORE,

are necessary. An evangelical institution of this kind would send forth many to bless both Italy and the world. Some who come up from far-off countries to study under papal direction would learn the Gospel, and return to preach the truth which once they persecuted.

Is any other opportunity which offers so hopeful as this? To bless not only Italy, but the world; and especially the papal world, sitting in darkness! Who would not be glad to do just this? No labored appeal is necessary. Facts speak.

MORRIS K. JESUP,
JOHN TAYLOR JOHNSTON,
HOWARD POTTER,
THEODORE ROOSEVELT,
GEORGE H. STUART,

are trustees. All moneys for the college will be under their complete control in every respect. What greater security for judicious management could be given! Mr. Theodore Roosevelt is now in Rome making due inquiry. Careful investigation shows that \$75,000 are required to purchase the ground and erect the necessary buildings. Can conscientious men who give to the LORD

with the same care they bestow upon their own business desire a better investment? Obviously, funds for this purpose will be given only by those who have means to give, and intelligence to appreciate the importance of the work. To these the undersigned appeals in name of the trustees.

Inquiries (by letter only) will be promptly answered if addressed to

JOHN B. THOMPSON,

Office of MORRIS K. JESUP,

59 Liberty street,

New York.

N.B.—These “Occasional Papers” will be forwarded to all Friends and Subscribers to the Free Italian Church, who are earnestly invited to interest others in the spread of the Gospel in Italy.

EVANGELIZATION COMMITTEE

OF THE FREE ITALIAN CHURCH.

Appointed in General Assembly at Rome, December, 1872.

A. R. VAN NEST, D.D., American Church, Florence, *President*.

PAOLO DE-MICHELIS, Evangelist in Pisa, *Secretary*.

FRANCESCO LAGOMARSINO, Evangelist in Milan.

ALESSANDRO GAVAZZI, Evangelist in Rome.

SALVATORE FERRETTI, Evangelist in Florence.

Signor JAHIER, Evangelist in Florence.

JOHN R. MACDOUGALL, M.A., Scotch Church, Florence,

Treasurer and Foreign Secretary.

SYNOD'S ROOMS, 34 VESEY STREET, }
NEW YORK, *February 18, 1873.* }

The Rev. Drs. Van Nest and Thompson, the President, and the Commissioner of the Free Italian Church, are well known to us. They have done faithful service in the ministry, but none of their work has been of greater interest or importance than that in which they are now engaged for the Free Italian Church and its Roman Collegé. We commend this work to all who desire the progress of the Gospel in Italy, with the assurance that their contributions cannot pass through safer hands.

JOHN L. SEE,

Cor. Sec. Board of Education, R. C. A.

JACOB WEST,

Cor. Sec. Board of Domestic Missions, R. C. A.

J. M. FERRIS,

Cor. Sec. Board of Foreign Missions, R. C. A.

COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY, }
PRINCETON, N. J., *January 25, 1873.* }

The Rev. Dr. MacDougall of Florence has the confidence of the friends of the Evangelization of Italy, in Great Britain and Ireland, as a man of activity and sound judgment, an excellent and trustworthy man of business, and well fitted to take charge of the funds contributed for the spread of the Gospel in Italy.

JAMES McCOSH.

BOSTON, *January 31, 1873.*

Having visited Brother MacDougall at Florence and made minute inquiries while there respecting his work in Italy, as well as conversed with leading Christian brethren in Great Britain and on the Continent, I can assure those interested in this work that their funds cannot go into safer or more prudent hands.

JAMES B. DUNN.

I have great pleasure in commending Rev. Dr. MacDougall and his work to the confidence of Christians in America, from a personal acquaintance with him.

A. S. BARNES.

